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MILITARY AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC SECURITY

NATION STRENGTHENS ITS NAVAL FORCES

Paris DEFENSE NATIONALE in French Mar 80 pp 161-162

[Article by Jean Labayle]

[Text] Before the fall of the Saigon regime (29 April 1975), most of the warships of the former Vietnamese Navy were either scuttled or had made their way to the Philippines or Thailand. Since they were all American ships, they were turned over to the U.S. Navy, which subsequently transferred them to the Philippine Navy. A few vessels that had fled to Singapore returned to Vietnam. It was with these latter vessels and some 30 small ships being used by the Vietcong that the Hanoi regime rebuilt the nucleus of its naval force. Since that time, and particularly since the friendship and cooperation pact with the USSR (November 1978), the Soviets, by granting material, have substantially strengthened their ally's naval force. At present, that force reportedly includes the following: 2 recent former Soviet frigates of the Petya delivered in December of 1978 (1,100 tons, 30 knots, four 76.2 AA guns, ASM [antisubmarine] weaponry); 1 former U.S. Coast Guard cutter, the "Tham Mgu Lao, 2,800 tons, which was reportedly equipped with SS-N-2 Styx-type missiles; 1 former American convoy destroyer, 1,850 tons, dating from 1943; two 650-ton corvettes, former American minesweepers of the Admirable class, launched 35 years ago; 2 to 4 missile-launching patrol boats of the Soviet OSA II type, 240 tons, 36 knots, 4 Styx missiles, four 30 AA Guns; a minimum of 4 Soviet motor/torpedo boats of the Shershen type, 180 tons, 45 knots, four T/533, four 30 AA Guns; and 1 landing ship, 1,000 tons, Polnocnyi type.

To these units, of which only those of Soviet origin have any real military value, must be added the units of the former Vietcong Navy still in service, that is, 3 missile launching vedettes of the Komar type armed with 2 Styx launchers, three 200-ton patrol boats of the SO.1 type and 10 to 20 small vessels still in sailing condition, including river patrol boats, gunboats, landing-craft, and so on.

It is thought that the USSR will give the Vietnamese Navy one or two submarines, if only for training future crews or for antisubmarine training of Petya-type frigates. But this or these two submarines could only be of an old W or R type, for instance.

The current manpower of the Vietnamese Navy is unknown.

7129
CSO: 4200

MILITARY AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC SECURITY

CAO VAN KHANH TALK ON IN-COLLEGE TRAINING OF RESERVE OFFICERS

Hanoi DAI HOC VA TRUNG HOC CHUYEN NGHIEP [HIGHER AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION] in Vietnamese Nos 3-4, Mar-Apr 80 pp 15-17

[Speech by Lt Gen Cao Van Khanh, Deputy Chief of General Staff of the VPA: "Better Train Reserve Officers"*]

[Text] Comrade Deputy Director of Cabinet of the Premier's Office, Comrades Ministers and Heads of General Departments,

Dear comrades,

The conference to review the training of reserve officers in colleges in 1979 has been crowned with success. On behalf of the Ministry of National Defense and the Ministry of Higher and Vocational Education, may I express my sincere thanks to the comrades heads of ministries and departments, to the comrades heads of the State Planning Commission, the Departments of Propaganda and Training and Science and Education of the [Party] Central Committee and the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union Central Committee, and to the comrades representing various sectors. Your presence today and your close and timely leadership over the recent past have greatly contributed to the achievements scored in training reserve officers in colleges in 1979 and also to the success of this conference.

We warmly praise the presidents of schools inside and outside the army for quickly assimilating the reserve officers' training policy, overcoming all difficulties and closely cooperating with one another in training thousands of young and strong officers to meet requirements of two urgent tasks facing the country.

We sincerely thank the comrades newsmen, cameramen and televisionmen who have, over the past 8 months, positively and substantially contributed to propagandizing the party line and policy on reserve officers in the new situation, to promptly disseminating good experiences and also to the achievements registered in training reserve officers in 1979.

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* DAI HOC VA TRUNG HOC CHUYEN NGHIEP footnote: Speech made at the close of the conference to review the training of reserve officers in colleges in 1979. The title is given by the editorial staff.

Dear comrades,

The conference has heard a recapitulative report on the in-college training of reserve officers who graduated in 1979. Working with urgency, earnestness and proficiency, you have contributed sound views, exchanged valuable experiences and dealt with many problems to make it possible to continue research and to increasingly improve the guidance and organization of task execution. This proves that we have conducted intensive studies, grasped the meaning of training and made adequate preparations.

The conference has unanimously agreed on basic subjects and has contributed additional views supporting the assessment of the results of the in-college training of reserve officers in 1979 and clarifying the training trend in 1980 according to the steering spirit expressed by the premier of the government.

The Ministries of National Defense and Higher and Vocational Education have the duty to sum up and study the abovementioned views, to report to the premier of the government and to ask for guidance ideas in order to set forth complete regulations and conform the in-college training of reserve officers with the state system.

Dear comrades,

Following are some additional ideas which we would like to submit to the conference.

As all of you know, the situation in our country is such that while enjoying peace, we are faced with the possibility of a war that may break out any time. Our nation is being threatened by a great danger--that is, the scheme of Beijing expansionism to weaken and annex Vietnam. This very wicked scheme may extend over many years as the Beijing authorities have repeatedly stated.

To bankrupt this scheme and defeat all wars of aggression instigated by the expansionists, it is of the utmost importance to thoroughly understand the revolutionary line in the new stage and to strengthen the overall potentials of our country in order to enable it, under whatever circumstances, to successfully build socialism, to firmly defend the socialist fatherland and to fulfill its international obligations.

National construction must constantly be linked to national defense: this is a law of subsistence and development for our nation and a requirement for the survival of our people. This law is exercising a strong effect on our country's society and governing the process of development of the Vietnamese revolution in the new stage.

The resolution of the Fourth [Party] Congress states: "It is necessary to properly coordinate economy with national defense and to associate national construction with national defense. Simultaneously with overall national

construction, efforts must be exerted to build a strong all-people's national defense, to build the people's armed forces and to build a national defense industry in order to enable the country to readily foil all attacks by the aggressors. The duty to perfrom labor must be closely associated with the military obligation so as to simultaneously step up economic construction and steadily consolidate and strengthen national defense."

2. [as published] Now more than ever, we must correctly settle the close relationships between national defense construction and overall national construction according to the motto: "Close coordination between economy and national defense and vice versa."

Dear comrades,

To defeat an aggressive army with such a large numerical strength (about 4 million) as the Chinese army, we cannot do otherwise than prepare for a people's war to defend the socialist fatherland--a war which will necessitate the deployment of all categories of troops, which will reflect the broad scope of the country and which will mobilize all its potentials with a view to combining the strength of a modern regular standing army with that of the broad masses' armed forces and to coordinating the strength of well-trained mobile forces with that of the on-the-spot local people's war to be waged everywhere and at all times so as to vanquish the enemy right at the outset, on the first border line, on the sea islands and wherever the enemy may come.

Along with building a strong, well-trained regular force, we must, therefore, build a powerful reserve force with a body of reserve officers as the nucleus. This is the best way consistent with objective laws to settle the relationships between economy and national defense while implementing the policy on cadres, to meet the current requirements of national economy and to simultaneously stand ready and prepared to satisfy the demand for cadres should a large-scale war break out.

In this spirit, we must try to build a body of reserve officers with a large numerical strength, with increasingly high qualifications, with a structure conformable to the combat requirements of a modern regular people's army and with a scientific management formula so that these cadres may, in peacetime, positively contribute to national economic construction and, in wartime, readily join the army in response to its demand for cadres. Forming a reserve force, in general, and a body of reserve officers, in particular, is not only an immediately urgent requirement but also a task of strategic significance along the revolutionary, economic and military lines of the party; to do so is to contribute to building not only a body of cadres for the people's armed forces but also a common contingent of cadres for both the party and state.

Dear comrades,

Of all types of people suitable for induction into the ranks of reserve officers, students of colleges and advanced schools constitute a very important factor.

Belonging to the young generation and with their scientific and sociological knowledge, their good health, their intellect and creativeness, their sensitivity to novelties, their high sense of self-respect and their great energy, enthusiams and ambitions--these male and female students will directly inherit the revolutionary undertaking and shoulder the task of building and firmly defending the Vietnamese socialist fatherland; at the same time, they are fully qualified to become officers of the modern regular VPA. With such latent capabilities, they will help build a huge strength for the homeland if they receive an all-round advanced training and indoctrination. In the past anti-French and anti-U.S. resistance and in the present struggle against the Beijing expansionists, many male and female college students have joined the army in answer to the sacred call for national defense and many of them have become heroes, valiant combatants and skilled commanding and leading cadres of the army.

Throughout our country, there are now nearly 70 colleges and advanced schools with more than 100,000 students; each year thousands of male and female students graduate most of whom having been trained in fields of activity closely related to national defense requirements or possessing the necessary knowhow to meet economic and national defense demands. They are the country's immense potential for national defense. We must, therefore, take care of them and further train them into new socialist human beings with overall capacities to fulfill these two strategic tasks.

These overall capacities and qualities must first be manifested through a warm love for the homeland and socialism, a readiness to sacrifice individual interests for the defense of the socialist fatherland, a spirit of collective ownership of the country and self-mastery, a high sense of discipline and solidarity, a civilized behavior and life style and, at the same time, the knowledge and abilities proper to scientific-technical cadres and reserve officers ready to fulfill the two tasks of building the economy and building a modern regular people's army.

This year, a good initial result has been obtained from the training of college students but it can only meet immediate requirements.

We need to organize and combine various agencies to conduct studies to work out a comprehensive curriculum system from the general education to the college level in order to provide advanced training for students to endow them with knowledges of a continuous, successive and nonoverlapping nature while ensuring maximum effectiveness and spending minimum time, and also in order to maintain the substance of the reserve officers' training and that of the scientific-technical curriculum and to obtain high quality. In line with the spirit of the Political Bureau resolution on education reform, it is necessary to link the military training subject with the theme of political, scientific and technical education. That is a basic trend which we must continuously study and implement after the present conference.

To develop the result of the training task in 1979 and to strictly implement directive No 387/TTg of 27 December 1979 of the premier of the government, the conference has unanimously agreed on the following basic points:

1. It is necessary to achieve a deeper understanding of the resolution of the Political Bureau and the directives of the premier of the government and the Central Military Party Committee Standing Committee on education reform and on the training of reserve officers within colleges as well as the requirements of this task with a view to preparing a contingent of reserve officers ready to meet task requirements in wartime and also with the aim of educating youths and college students and transforming them into new all-round socialists able to contribute to the fulfillment of the two strategic missions entrusted by the country.

The need for a thorough understanding of these missions must be satisfactorily met by leading cadres, specialized organs, party and mass organizations and every cadre and student inside and outside the army so as to achieve a high degree of unanimity and determination and to strive to overcome all difficulties and attain the set goals.

The conference has also unamimously agreed that, instead of creating additional difficulties to students or limiting the quality of their scientific-technical knowledge, the training of reserve officers in colleges will contribute in a great measure to enhancing their overall qualifications and capacities.

2. With a thorough understanding of the need to implement the education reform, it is necessary to determine guidelines and objectives and to draw up a training plan for each target, school and sector to meet the requirements of each branch of service. It is necessary to carefully study and work out an overall and systematic in-school military training program for middle schools up to colleges, to harmoniously associate the subjects of military training with those of scientific teaching and to subtly combine the substance of political indoctrination aimed at inspiring patriotism and determination and readiness to defend the fatherland with the contents of the education intended to inculcate the qualities and capabilities proper to new socialists in the new era. The training of reserve officers must be systematized and linked with the goal of training scientific-technical cadres. Failure to meet the political, ethical or specialized criteria required of a prospective reserve officer will disqualify him from the position of scientific-technical cadre and vice versa.

Considering the period of 5 months of military training undergone by students throughout an academic year to become reserve officers, the development of their specialized abilities is essential but is not a central and unique task. It is, however, first necessary to improve the qualities and capacities of these male and female students to fit them for the position of reserve officers and, on this basis, to further enhance their specialized and professional skills.

3. There is an urgent need to strengthen the in-college organizations responsible for leading the military training and formation of reserve officers, to reinforce the military training apparatus and to draw up plans to train the body of military teachers and heighten their standards in accordance with the types of students (reserve officers may be employed as military teachers).

it is necessary to continue the compilation of uniform teaching documents and curricula, to closely coordinate the overall possibilities of schools inside and outside the army (with respect to teachers, equipment and documents), to assign tasks to these schools and to induce them to cooperate and help one another steadfastly on a long-term basis (or form a brotherhood or friendship with one another).

4. Organizing the registration and strict management of reserve officers and regularly improving their standards by various methods is an essential task aimed at fully using and developing their capacities and avoiding unnecessary formalities and waste.

5. The tasks that ensure the implementaiton of others must be studied and translated into systems and standards in order to unify the organization of work execution...

In addition, a number of questions raised by you must be further and carefully studied prior to submitting a report to the government which will subsequently enact, through the state legal system, a law on military obligation in the new situation, a law on the officers' terms of service and regulations on the tasks of reserve officers and on a system of economic and national defense agencies in various sectors... These questions have been prepared by the Ministry of National Defense and will be submitted to the National Assembly in 1980.

All the aforementioned tasks will be executed through the close cooperation of the Ministry of National Defense with the Ministry of Higher and Vocational Education, the Ministry of Education and other ministries and state agencies.

Owing to the guidance of the Premier's Office and to the active participation of schools inside and outside the army, we firmly believe that, under the aforementioned guidelines, the training of reserve officers will be put into the right, rational and scientific track and will bring about ever greater results.

Once again, on behalf of the Ministry of National Defense and the Ministry of Higher and Vocational Education, I sincerely thank you and wish you good health and success in carrying out the directive of the premier of the government on the task of training reserve officers in 1980.

9332
CSO: 4209

MILITARY AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC SECURITY

BUILDING OF SELF-DEFENSE, RESERVE FORCES IN SOUTHERN SCHOOLS INTENSIFIED

Hanoi DAI HOC VA TRUNG HOC CHUYEN NGHIEP [HIGHER AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION] in Vietnamese Nos 3-4, Mar-Apr 80 pp 18-19

[Dan Quan article: "An Outline of the Military Work in Southern Vietnam Schools"]

[Text] During the 1978-1979 academic year, the colleges and vocational middle schools in southern Vietnam overcame numerous difficulties and intensified the military work in many respects.

Military Training--Though not yet as methodical in the field of military training as those in the north, last year many southern Vietnam schools displayed a self-reliance spirit in solving themselves problems relating to material facilities (drill fields, study equipment) and trainers and simultaneously secured maximum assistance from army units and military organs in their respective localities. By directly cooperating with specialized military cadres in organizing, following and inspecting task execution, many school leading cadres settled affairs rapidly and successfully (as in the case of the Ho Chi Minh Municipal Polytechnic College). To make the training course more successful, the Thu Duc Technical Teachers College strenuously arranged boarding and lodging to transform all nonresident students into resident ones. The Ho Chi Minh Municipal University set aside a special area with a relatively sufficient amount of teaching instruments and equipment to provide military training for students. Because of a lack of space, the Ho Chi Minh Municipal Architecture College sent all its students to army units for military training and obtained good results. The Ho Chi Minh Municipal Advanced School of Fine Arts sent out 10 of its cadres for training; on their return to the school, these cadres served as military teachers, thus realistically solving the current shortage of this type of teachers. All schools ensured that 96 to 98 percent of their students underwnet military training. Many male and female students managed to have additional training beyond the official training time.

Self-Defense Organization--At the beginning of the 1978-1979 academic year, the Danang Polytechnic College was entrusted with experimentally organizing a students' self-defense force. However, after the Beijing expansionists launched a war of aggression, all colleges and vocational middle schools in southern Vietnam set up self-defense forces composed of students, cadres and

office and manual workers. To date, self-defense forces have been formed up to the regiment size in large schools and up to the battalion size in small ones.

After organizing self-defense forces, these schools were able to carry out the following tasks:

--Patrolling, guard duty, combat readiness, satisfactory protection of school property and arrest of persons involved in major thefts by self-defense units of the Ho Chi Minh Municipal Teachers College, the Can Tho College, the Danang Polytechnic College...

--The formation of self-defense forces contributed to the performance of military training and the shaping of a military life style in schools. The Nghia Binh Forestry School, the Danang Polytechnic College and the Danang Teachers Advanced School established a system of in-school activities and further improved school management, which resulted in an increase in the number of outstanding and progressive students.

Recruitment for Mobilization--The schools regularly inculcated a concept of national defense and a sense of the duty to defend the fatherland into students, cadres and office and manual workers and carried out a registration of reserve troops each year. When the entire country was seething with the anti-expansionist struggle momentum, 100 percent of students voluntarily asked to join the army and many of these applications were written down with blood. During the recent troop recruitment, colleges and vocational middle schools in southern Vietnam fulfilled the set norms and a number of them even surpassed the norms by 3 to 6 percent.

Labor Performance to Build Defense Lines and Promote National Defense--Schools in Ho Chi Minh Municipality undertook to dig out and pile up some 25,000 cubic meters of earth according to the motto: "Construction works by youths and college students determined to defeat expansionism" and completed this task in only 8 days--that is, 4 days ahead of schedule. During this drive, nearly 200 students were admitted into the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union right at the worksite.

The schools also contributed part of their technical work force to promoting national defense. For example, the polyetchnic College in Ho Chi Minh Municipality repaired a number of machines left behind by the enemy, studied ways to remotely explode mines, to improve mine detectors, signal apparatuses and so forth...

Besides making noteworthy progress, the military work in colleges and vocational middle schools in southern Vietnam was loaded with the following shortcomings:

--In the military training field, there was a lack of true stability and rational pattern. Generally speaking, schools still needed a body of cadres and teachers specialized in military training and there was a shortage of

fields, equipment and teaching instruments and documents. Instead of displaying a self-help for self-improvement spirit and trying to solve problems to become stable, many schools made light of military training or waited for and relied on the higher levels' assistance.

--Concerning the organization of self-defense forces, units were organized and activities carried out but mostly still out of formalism. Leadership was not yet close and meticulous and did not consider self-defense organizations to be an armed force ready to really fight and simultaneously an organization and a milieu to train a new type of man.

--In the field of indoctrination aimed at instilling a concept of national defense and a sense of the duty to defend the fatherland, the schools worked rather hard but did not pay close attention to each student; as a result, many students were not fully aware of the need to fulfill the military obligation.

--As for the registration of reserve troops, the reports made by schools were neither conformable to the models given nor completely accurate and submitted on schedule.

The military conference recently held by the southern Vietnam colleges and vocational middle schools has unified the implementation of military training guidelines and tasks in southern schools in 1979-1980 as follows:

1. Military training--In the 1979-1980 academic year, the Ministry of Higher and Vocational Education will draw up a uniform regular military training curriculum for colleges and vocational middle schools throughout the country. With the agreement of the Ministry of National Defense, the local military organs will continue to assume the military training of students of colleges and vocational middle schools in southern Vietnam but these schools shall have full-time cadres and teachers for this purpose. Many schools have taken the initiative in training military teachers themselves. Schools must exchange experiences on this special matter.

In the first stage, schools will organize a general military training of students to enable them to join the schools' self-defense forces and, on leaving schools, to join self-defense units in installations where they will work. In the subsequent stage, the achievments made in the first one will be developed by further training them into a reserve contingent while building a combat-ready reserve force for strategic mobilization.

2. Building self-defense forces and making overall preparations to cope with the worst situation--It is first necessary to make everyone clearly realize the nature of the enemy and his machiavellian alliance. Vigilance must be constantly be heightened together with the readiness to smash all disturbances locally created by the enemy's henchmen and also to defeat him should he directly launch an aggression. At the same time, training must be carried out continuously and satisfactorily.

Though continuing to organize the self-defense forces in schools according to the spirit of decision No 83/CP of the Government Council on the militarization of the entire people, attention must be paid to the characteristics of each school to determine an appropriate scale for these forces. The self-defense forces may be set up under various forms such as self-defense units to cover large targets, self-defense units to perform on-the-spot combat and mobile self-defense units. Attention must be paid to strengthening self-defense skeleton cadres and selecting those who have good ethics, enthusiasm and knowhow and who do not feel restricted by functions and structures...

3. Introduction into a military life style--The Ministry of Higher and Vocational Education has promulgated decision No 669/QD-QS regulating the introduction of a military life style into colleges, advanced schools and vocational middle schools. These regulations must be applied to students, cadres and office and manual workers in schools to turn this life style into a habit. Despite initial difficulties, there has been a change in the life style in schools which have done this job well.

4. It is necessary to work out plans for combat and the maintenance of order and security in schools and the adjacent areas.

5. Troop recruitments and reserve force for mobilization purposes--The Ministries of National Defense, Higher and Vocational Education and Labor have jointly issued a circular directing the organization and training of reserve units ready for mobilization in colleges and vocational middle schools. All these schools must have cadres especially in charge of reserve troops and these cadres must undergo advanced specialized training to enable schools to continuously control the reserve force, to satisfactorily promote troop recruitment and to mobilize this force to support the front line.

6. The leadership exercised by party committees and boards of school directors over the military work in schools must be strengthened.

9332
CSO: 4209

PARTY MEMBERSHIP CARDS-ISSUING TASK NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

Hanoi NHAN DAN in Vietnamese 16 Apr 80 p 3

[Party Building column by B.T.C.: "Improve the Quality of Party Membership Card Issuing"]

[Text] The phase of issuance of party membership cards on the occasion of the party's 50th anniversary has been over. More than 10 percent of all party members received their cards. In those basic party organisations that issued cards in the first phase, the party committee echelons kept up better the ranks of cadres and party members and further consolidated the party and mass organisations. The quality of the ranks of party members was improved. The masses' participation in judging and criticising cadres and party members brought about positive results and boosted the sense of responsibility and faith in the party. The phase of issuance of party membership cards had positive effects on the fulfillment of political tasks in localities and sectors.

The outstanding experience drawn from the first phase of issuance of party membership cards indicates that the party committee echelons do link the issuance of cards with consolidating and perfecting the organisation of the party base to attain the goal of securing strong and clean party bases, stepping up the fulfillment of political tasks and organising the people's living conditions in every unit and locality. Issuing party membership cards is a phase of keen political activities and a phase complete by itself of the revolutionary movement, improves the quality of party members and expels those who are unqualified from the party, raises the strength of party and mass organisations and the administration at the basic level and mobilises the masses for properly carrying out all political tasks. Issuing party membership cards is a combined measure requiring a close combination of fulfillment of political tasks and the party's ideological and organising work.

Leadership of party committee echelons over the issuance of party membership cards first lies in the plan for consolidating and perfecting party organisations and other organisations at the basic level in conformity

with a positive and active plan. The VCP Central Committee has decided that where party membership cards are issued is where the party chapter and organization are strong and clean. This means that there all political tasks and obligation to the state are fulfilled, the standard of living is stable and improved, the people's collective ownership right is respected, the ranks of cadres and party members are educated and screened and the party base's key cadres have the qualities and capabilities to carry out their tasks. Party committee echelons, particularly district and basic party committees, must get to know again all aspects of the basic situation and evaluate in a clear manner the strengths and weaknesses of every party base so as to draw up plans for consolidating and striving close to the capabilities of each party organization. The localities that plan to issue party membership cards in the coming phases must concentrate the strength of committee and sector cadres on assisting the party bases in consolidating themselves in order to become within a short time strong and clean units in accordance with a steady and urgent plan.

Consolidating organization, building strong bases and actively creating favorable basic conditions for issuing cards to members is an immediate and urgent thing to do. Doing it properly makes the issuance of party membership cards become a driving force that strongly speeds up the task of building party organizations, improving the quality of party members and fulfilling political tasks.

In addition to the consolidation and building of party bases to be strong in every way, other jobs like observing and selecting units for card issuing, practicing criticism and self-criticism within the party, observing personalities of party members, dividing party members into groups, etc. must be linked with the political task in a lively manner suitable for each party organization.

The determination of party members' qualifications must be aimed at raising the quality of party members, developing their strengths, overcoming the negative aspects and helping cadres and party members to strive to comply with the needs of the political task of each party organization. The local and sector party committee echelons must propose the needs for party members' efforts in conformity with the situation and task of each type of party base and each party base, point to the problems to be corrected and carefully go over party members' qualifications. Checking their qualifications is in the form of casting secret votes in a party chapter or basic party organization, with consideration by the higher echelons.

Self-criticisms and criticisms must clearly show what is good and what is not good yet and distinguish between the right and the wrong in connection with fulfilling the task and function assigned by the party, state or mass organization and implementing the positions and policies of the state and the obligation to the latter. Self-criticisms and criticisms within the party must be closely combined and carried out simultaneously with the efforts to encourage the masses to fight against negative phenomena in

society and to boldly criticize cadres and party members. Observing and criticizing party members who are the leading cadres must receive positive guidance from party committee echelons, particularly the ones that are directly supervising these cadres.

Mobilizing the masses for participating in party building is a necessary measure that can bring about good results. Only by regularly doing this job properly can our party succeed in properly managing the ranks of cadres and party members and at the same time strengthening the relations between the party and the masses. Party organizations must create at any cost an atmosphere of enthusiasm in which the masses step up production and all sorts of activities and work, boldly offer their opinions about the leadership of party organizations and frankly criticize cadres and party members.

We must guide the masses toward seeking to understand fully the qualifications of party members and organize the system of using sealed boxes to let the masses offer their opinions about unqualified party members.

To further raise the quality of card issuing in accordance with the above-mentioned needs, all party committee echelons must in time draw experience from the recent phase of issuance of party membership cards and have positive plans for issuing cards in the 19 May and subsequent phases. Although the entire collective of party committee echelons assumes leadership and guidance, work must also be distributed to some key cadres in the echelons in charge of this job, particularly those who are capable and have the authority to lead committees and sectors toward carrying out the same task, as the cards-issuing work is closely linked with totally speeding up the fulfillment of political tasks.

Issuing party membership cards is a phase of keen political activities within the party and among the people aimed at consolidating party organizations, raising the quality of party members, struggling against negative phenomena and creating strong revolutionary changes in the movement at the basic level.

5598
CSO: 4209

ECONOMIC DEFEAT, MATERIAL SHORTAGES PLAGUE NATION

Paris LE MONDE DIPLOMATIQUE in French Mar 80 pp 15-18

[Article by Pierre Brocheux and Daniel Hemery]

[Text] The North, Rear Base of the Party and the State

Vietnam is suffering economic defeat and experiencing material shortages of all sorts. The basic goal of the 5-year plan for 1976-1980 had been to achieve self-sufficiency regarding foodstuffs within a 4-year period by means of a production of 21 million tons of grain, did not achieve the desired results and was publicly rejected. The figures advanced for 1979--the Vietnamese statistical service remains very rudimentary--indicate the production of 13 to 14 million tons (see Table I).

Table I. Difficulties of Five-Year Plan for 1976-1980
(Differences in production and adjustments for the last 2 years)

	1979		1980	
	Goals	Production	Initial Goals	Corrected Goals
Grains (millions of tons)	16.5	13.5	21	15
Coal (millions of tons)	7.5	7.5	10	8.5
Cement (tons)	1,028,000	729,000	2,000,000	1,300,000
Fertilizers (tons)	700,000	700,000	1,300,000	1,000,000
Electricity (billions of kilowatt/hours)	4.2	3.65	5	?

Note: Production of coal, steel, glass, processed tea, sugar and bricks increased during 1979 compared with 1978. Output of electricity, wood cement, paper, procelain, thread and cotton textiles declined.
SOURCE: Vietnamese periodicals and publications.

The food shortage is therefore substantial. Indeed, production has scarcely improved in the north or even in the south, where the decline in paddy harvests that marked the war years still persists. Food shortages are now widespread and undoubtedly were previously unknown on the present scale. During the war, shortages were avoided, thanks to the massive economic aid that the United States gave to the south (an average of U.S. 650 million annually from 1969 to 1972) and to that supplied by China to the north, mainly in the form of rice (500,000 tons annually), medicines and common consumer goods. The sudden drying up of these two sources had catastrophic effects, provoking a lasting crisis in the country as a whole, one which aid programs extended by the Council for Economic Mutual Assistance (CEMA) have been unable to eliminate. Difficulties are further aggravated by the need to provide emergency food assistance to Cambodia and to export consumer goods in order to cover a portion of the country's imports. In 1978, exports officially made up 15 percent of consumer good production and provided 70 percent of the country's foreign exchange income.[1]

In a country where population growth is approximately 2.6 percent annually, food increasingly becomes the key economic problem. The cultivated area does not increase by more than 3 percent annually while improvement in yields is practically negligible. Any increase in production is immediately absorbed by populated growth. With 5 million hectares in rice and a yield of some 4 tons per hectare on the average, the harvest represents 300 to 400 kilograms of rice per capita, whereas the minimum required is about 500 kilograms.[2] At least 4 million tons of additional foodstuffs are needed to stabilize the food situation.

Rice is scarce, a little less in the south than in the north, and it is very expensive. The grain ration delivered by state stores at a low cost, fluctuates around 13 kilograms monthly, but it now includes only about 1 kilo of rice, the remainder consisting of manioc, corn and imported wheat, which the Vietnamese call "filler." Other foodstuffs are only distributed in meager rations. Therefore the full price must be paid for fish, rice, yams, fruits and vegetables at the thousands of little markets where peasants sell produce grown on their plots or animals they rear. While southern markets are relatively well supplied, those of the north are shockingly bare. But in both cases, they are exorbitantly costly in relation to the purchasing power of monthly salaries, which vary between 40 and 60 dong[3] for most wage-earners (see Tables II and III).

The same applies to other consumer goods which are in cruelly short supply, particularly in the north. For 2 years now, the people of the north have scarcely seen any textiles. Medical treatment is by means of plants commonly grown in the villages. Despite efforts made by the authorities, a portion of the population suffers from malnutrition. In the view of many doctors, many children, who on the whole are well treated, are nevertheless smaller in size than standards set by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Table II. Two Sources of Consumer Goods--Sampling of prices on free market and in state stores (in dong)

	Haiphong market (Sept 1979) (free market prices)	My Tho Market (Nov 1979) (free market prices)	State stores in Haiphong (Sept 1979) (prices set by state)	Display of products in Quang Ninh Province, (Sept 1979) at Hon Gai. (prices set by state)
1 egg	0.80			
1 kilo sweet potatoes	1.60			
1 liter rice		3.4 to 3.7 (aver.qual.)		0.40 (high qual.)
1 can condensed milk			1.65	
1 kilo pork	18		30 to 35	
1 liter nuoc nam				0.50
1 kilo small fish	8 to 10		10	
1 kilo dried fish				1.60
12 oranges	8 to 10			
men's slacks			13 to 15	
man's shirt				4.30
man's suit				120.
rubber sandals	5			4
women's high heel sandals	30		16.5	
1 meter black cloth for women's slacks	30			
1 woman's blouse (cai ao)			6	
1 bicycle				300 (free market price: 700 to 800)
1 inner tube			4 (free market price: 18)	

Table III. Miscellaneous Wages and Salaries (an average of 40 to 60 dong monthly)

	(in dong)
Hospital doctor (My Tho)	105
Hospital doctor (starting) (Tay Ninh)	60
Hospital nurse (Ho Chi Minh City)	55
Woman textile worker (Mill No 8 in Ho Chi Minh City)	45
Skilled male worker (Tong Nhat machine building plant in Cholon)	90 to 200

Prospects for improvement at the present time appear to be very limited. The population is growing too quickly and demographic pressure is too great, especially in the rural north. In the deltas of the Red, Than Hoa and Nghe Tinh rivers, population density is as high as 1,000 inhabitants per square kilometer. Each person has on the average 600 square meters and every year, the gainfully employed Vietnamese population increases by approximately 1 million inhabitants.[4] In order to have an idea of the gravity of the situation, there is nothing like wandering through the villages of the north, overpopulated with children and young people. For instance, in the Yen So cooperative near Hanoi, there are 5,518 persons, of which 2,232 are school-age children; at the Ba To cooperative (Vinh), there are 3,875 inhabitants, of which 1,200 are pupils; and so on. There were 52 million Vietnamese in 1979; there will be 75 million in 20 years' time.

While the available land still represents a large asset, the fact is that investments and heavy equipment are lacking for the essential infrastructure. The balance between production and consumption is extremely delicate. In the event of a natural disaster, such as the catastrophic floods of 1978, or more recently, the grievous drought suffered in the north this past winter, the threshold of danger is very quickly reached. It seems likely, under the circumstances, that the food crisis will persist into the middle of the coming decade or even into the 1990's. At best, it can be hoped that with the help of the USSR and international organizations, it will be possible to maintain rationing at its present level, one that simply cannot be pushed any lower. Given present conditions, participation by the Western nations in Vietnamese reconstruction seems not only to be a moral and political obligation but more than ever, an overriding economic requirement.

Against this background of poverty and defeat, a number of regional inequalities and differences stand out, both as regards standards of living and social behavior. The contrast between the north and what is commonly called the south (but which also includes the central region) is more striking than ever. How will the situation develop? What will the long-term impact be? These are decisive questions for the future of Vietnam.

Organized War Economy

The north is poor, terribly poor. Daily life is especially harsh. Even if forewarned, a foreigner suffers a shock when he lands at Hanoi Airport. The town is grossly overpopulated. The layout of property and the urban structure have scarcely changed since the time of the French. There has been very little new building even though the population is 4 times larger than in 1954.

People share the old colonial homes, and the "compartments" in the old town--where two families sometimes make do with a single room--are

crowded into the haphazard construction's that have proliferated everywhere along the tiny narrow back alleys and in the immense straw hut districts along the periphery. The sight is the same in all the cities of the north: in Haiphong, Nam Dinh, Vinh, and so on. The war economy prevails but it is an organized kind of war economy, operating under conditions of extreme underdevelopment in an agricultural country whose weak industrial potential was devastated by American bombing and is now highly dependent on CEMA aid. The use of modern technology is the exception, obsolescence is the rule, and equipment is worn out. North Vietnam hangs on, but at the cost of incredible economizing of means. The towns are feebly lit, or even without electric power, as in the case of Vinh, flattened by American bombers. Its central power station, moved to the country as part of the so tan policy (dispersion), has not been started up again. In the semi-rural or "ruralized," towns tiny family gardens occupy every last inch of arable ground and coal, cement and bags of rice are for the most part hauled in carts drawn by oxen or simply pulled by hand or even toted on the old rickshaws of the 1960's. Manual labor is preponderant at work sites, where the female workers build new constructions brick by brick, their faces protected against the dust by a piece of cloth. On the highways, other women fill potholes with tar which they wear gloves to handle. One does encounter machines such as bulldozers or large fleets of foreign trucks, but on the whole, mechanization exists only in spots. Shoulder yokes, hand carts, sickles and sampans are as important economically as trucks or engines. Handicrafts, cottage production, predominate in the processing of raw materials and the making of manufactured goods. There is only one mechanized sector: the army, the paradoxical superimposition of an ultramodern military machine on a preindustrial economic base: Vietnam is walking upright.

A large proportion of the rural and urban population is underemployed, as may be seen from the proliferation of small-scale occupations. In the old town sector of Hanoi, there is no "partition" without its stand of votive candles, its soldier's helmets, foreign cigarettes sold singly. There are no sidewalks in the town where one does not encounter itinerant bicycle repairmen, tire inflators and little girls selling cigarettes whose oil lamps are lighted on the edge of the curb at nightfall. The people lack the most basic necessities: soap, cloth, coal and paper. Even the "special" shops, reserved for the families of important cadres and foreigners and which are the nerve center of the parallel market--particularly the market for "555" cigarettes, the real hard currency of Vietnam--offer privileged customers a limited selection of goods. The overcrowded schools, where children are rotated in 4-hour shifts between 6 am and 6 pm have no notebooks, pencils or textbooks. Until very recently, students of history at Hanoi University copied their final dissertations or theses, which were often quite remarkable, by hand, with infinite patience and care. The university library does not contain a single western work on social science dated later than the 1960's, and the same is true of all the major libraries in the country, since without loans they cannot make foreign purchases. One can

therefore gage the degree to which Vietnamese intellectuals are cut off from discussions and ideas current in the West and how anxious they are for outside contact.

And yet, in this limited situation, the north's social and political system appears to be free of any major crisis, and cohesion and discipline would seem to be quite strong. The communist regime apparently enjoys a very broad consensus among villagers and townspeople, as demonstrated by the impressive activity in repairing war damages, traces of which are now difficult to discover. Obviously, the people of the north are not merely "submitting" to history. Tirelessly, in the paddy fields, on the roads, at the work sites, every person is caught up in a tenacious struggle for life, for survival itself. There is no sign of giving up, few perceptible signs of collective demoralization. The families garbed in rags and tatters, pushing carts filled with coal-dust, that are chance upon the roads of the Hon Gai coal basin, seem to be nothing more than a small minority. The very rare beggars are never anything but old people. Clearly, in contrast with conditions during the colonial period, which goes back only 25 years ago and constitutes the only point of historical reference for the population, the majority of the families do have enough to eat and the basic means to provide care and education for the children.

These positive attainments, which are decisive in former, underdeveloped colony, insure the peasants' relatively active support for the regime. The truth is that communism is deeply rooted in the peasantry. In fact, the latter's backing over a number of decades constitutes the foundation for the party-state system established in the north after the first revolutionary war. Indeed, for the peasants, the communist-led revolution raised a number of basic preliminary issues.

The revolution drove out French imperialism and overturned the class of rural notables and small landholders who dominated the countryside. The establishment of cooperatives placed production by peasants and the villages under state control through the intermediary of the district (huyen) administrative apparatus. However, the peasant society also has its "defenses," its mechanisms for autonomy, its family and local ties that attenuate the effects of a system, which, after all, is not lacking in advantageous compensations. The villagers have a say in the management of the cooperatives; they elect their administrative committees, attend their general meetings and take part in them. Above all, they have their small family plots--5 percent of the area of each cooperative--and they are free to sell the products grown there. From this they derive a goodly proportion (at least 40 to 50 percent) of their real income. Furthermore, arrangements can be made with the cooperative, such as the individual development of certain collectively-owned land, which is probably not exceptional since a directive issued by the Central Committee in August of 1979 more or less legalized this sort of practice. Undoubtedly, indifference to work of the cooperative is quite common, if one is to believe the official press. Perhaps profits from private enterprises are more attractive, but

taking everything into account, the real income of the peasant is greater than it was and more stable. In the model cooperatives, which foreigners can visit, the peasant's income is certainly not far below that of the urban workers. At Yen So (Hanoi District) the average annual family income, including proceeds from individual plots, is about 1040 dong for each family having on the average, 5 or 6 children. At the Ba To cooperative (Vinh) in 1979, each laborer received 33 dong monthly, without counting income from family enterprises, which is also at least as much. Generally speaking, things seem a little easier in the country; the people seem better fed than city dwellers, who do not enjoy the resources of the precious family plots. The peasant civilization, altered by the revolution but still strong and dynamic, thrives in the villages of the delta area which are much more pleasant than the rather gloomy suburbs of Hanoi or Haiphong.

The disappearance of the periodical famines--one often forgets that a cycle of famines entered around 1930--the establishment of a network of schools and minimal health facilities, however spartan, and the little plots of land are all elements of a lasting "historical compromise" reached between the bureaucratic state led by the revolutionary intelligentsia and the peasantry. Schools became accessible to everyone: at Yen So, the entire population has attended elementary school and 276 pupils are enrolled in the intermediate school on a half-work-half study schedule. The village also has about 100 students taking university courses. The same is true of Ba To, which sends 50 students to district schools and the university. Collectivization has made it possible to rationalize the production systems to an appreciable degree, reunite certain parcels of land to facilitate subsequent mechanization, begin the partial mechanization of farm labor--about 34 percent of it, according to official figures and despite the shortage of machinery--generalize the use of high yield strain of rice and the three-crop-a-year system for food products, and set up a rational and efficient water system. These are basic steps, but they do not go unnoticed. On the roads, the widespread use of 120-kilogram hand-drawn carts and particularly the use of bicycles, that great conquest of the Vietnamese peasant, are doing away with the old means of carrying by means of yokes. Electric pumps compete with the old scoop system for local irrigation. In many of the delta villages, along the major highway arteries, the collective buildings are electrified. Brick and tile ovens are found everywhere. Now, the peasant can afford a home made of stone. Not infrequently, in the straw huts in delta villages along the Red River, one observes one or another of those objects regarded as providing basic comfort: mosquito netting, furniture, radios, and sometimes even a sewing machine, objects which suffice to symbolize the promise of a better future now possible.

The liberation wars and particularly, the great nine-year war against the French, were above all an extraordinary means of stimulating the peasants' patriotism. In the villages of North Vietnam, the monuments to the dead,

with their impressive lists of war victims, attest to the heavy toll the peasants were willing to pay, just as the peasants of France had done in 1914-18, or those of Yugoslavia in 1939-45. The larger villages, which generally have several thousand inhabitants, saw hundreds of young men march off to fight and die in great numbers on the battle fields. The Ba To commune (with 3,875 inhabitants at present) provided 700 soldiers to the second Vietnam war and of these, 140 were killed, a ratio of one in five.

Even today, peasant nationalism is a strong factor in assuring social cohesion and unification and what is more the party works unceasingly to perpetuate it, especially by means of the constant presence of Ho Chi Minh's ideological cult. As both a national hero and a communist hero he symbolizes the perfect equivalence of party and nation.

In the north a national war and a social revolution, indissolubly tied together, were able to bridge the gap between the peasant masses and the communist intelligentsia, as shown by the sociological composition of the party. Data published last July (5) indicate that 8.8 percent of those on the communist rosters are workers, 9.6 percent are militants belonging to ethnic minorities and 17 percent are women. Clearly, members of peasant origin are in the majority. The party has permeated the peasantry but, in return, the peasantry has partially permeated the party since it is, in a way, the main breeding ground for the revolutionary elite.

A late arrival into the world system of modern states and at the cost of awesome sacrifices, the Vietnamese nation is identified--at least insofar as the northern half is concerned--with the party that founded the nation-state. For the latter, recourse to nationalist sentiment is therefore a functional necessity and in this sense, the Chinese threat offers a choice issue. All over the country, it fuels intense mobilization. Slogans are painted on the walls of the smallest villages in the north, boy and girl secondary school students practice hand-to-hand combat, young peasants learn to handle weapons on the village threshing floors, militia women with their weapons on a Sunday morning stand guard on the Red River dykes: For everyone war with China is almost certain, if not imminent. Much use is also made of past history. Did the historical institute not choose as its own principal subject for research the "Chinese Government's Tendency Toward Expansionism"...?

'The Biggest Hermit...'

In short, this cohesiveness that is characteristic of society in the north is powerfully structured by the party and its organizations at the different levels. The party directs, the state manages, and the people are the "collective master." That is the three-fold definition which the regime provides for itself, the third factor playing the fairly fuzzy role of the Holy Spirit in the Christian Holy Trinity. The party is organized at all stages of social life. Six production teams (subdivisions of the cooperatives) in the village of Hai Van (Ha Nam Ninh), hence six party cells,

comprising 5 percent of the population (6). The political monopoly is absolute and is further strengthened by the proposed constitution now being discussed. "In comparison with the constitutions of 1946 and 1959," one read in NHAN DAN in August of 1979, "the proposed constitution includes a new element stating that the Communist Party is the sole force directing the proletarian dictatorship in Vietnam. This is a very important item... It not only seeks to confirm a de facto situation... but also to confirm a need in principle, to present a key problem concerning the nature of the proletarian dictatorship state in the course of the process of building socialism..." Ideological indoctrination is ever at work in the form of countless study sessions (hoc tap), setting the weekly rhythm of enterprises, offices, cooperatives and schools. The practice of systematic political education and mass discussions, Chinese-style--such as those which took place in the autumn of 1979 on the subject of the proposed constitution and the decisions of the Sixth Plenum of the Central Committee--under the direction of the communist machine, exclusive holder of information and power enables each person to understand that he has no alternative but to abide by the general consensus. Any remnant of autonomy or dissidence is immediately circumscribed. Such action, in fact, is completed by the police, always present in the urban centers, from the neighborhood committee network to the all-powerful security forces. Outside the official framework, nothing can be done. Collective joint surveillance is effective; the bans, and particularly the ban on personal contacts with foreigners, are interiorized. The repressive system works as much by virtue of fear and deterrence as by physical coercion. Those who might protest, intellectuals who have visited the USSR or East Europe, who have heard of Soviet or Chinese dissidence, and who listen to foreign radio broadcasts, have no alternative but to remain silent and to retire within themselves. The biggest hermit of all is the one who lives in the capital..." A Chinese proverb that an illustrious writer is fond of quoting sums up the psychological drama lived by the intellectuals and by all those who, whether party members or mere citizens, suffer from the heavy dogmatism that now prevails and who aspire to another form of socialism. It is the drama of voluntary burial, accepted within the impressive monolith of peasant communism in which the omnipotence alone is sufficient to explain relative but real moderation. It is a situation of internal exile that one university student describes as follows: "What gives me the will to live is the books I have been able to gather together and with which I have the pleasure of conversing, alone at night. They are the only friends who never betray you..."

The endless weariness of the war which is still being waged and of the privations suffered is neutralized by the vigor of a fascinating mass nationalism and by the total absence of any political alternative. It is on this contradiction that the solidity of the communist state of North Vietnam is based. Certainly the peasants are discontent. However, for the time being, they are above all assimilating a new model of society and doing so on a massive scale, together with these basic notions which over a long period have been inculcated in the minds of the peoples of the capitalist

West: the prestige of knowledge, a liking for education and careers, the desire for social advancement, unconditional respect for modern technology, all of these being new aspirations whose value the revolution has enhanced and which it makes it possible to satisfy in a basic manner.

In North Vietnam, communism in its current authoritarian version has assured for itself now, and undoubtedly for a long time to come, the historical initiative. No human activity can escape the consistency it has established over a 30-year period of revolution.

The Question for the South: Accelerated Unification or Incomplete Unity?

"There is but one Vietnam." Yet to travel from the north to the south is to transcend the barriers of time as well as space, as soon as one flies over the countryside around Hue, where the corrugated iron roofs, a legacy of the American period, far outnumber the tile or thatched roofs. After the bumpy roads of the north, one comes to the billiard table highways of the south, leading from the airport at Phu Bai to the old imperial capital and thence to Danang.

One no longer feels the population pressure as one did in Hanoi or on the roads of the northern Delta. The old city retains its archaic charm and life seems to glide peacefully by, to the rhythms of nets being cast and the puff-puff sounds of motor-drive sampans on the Perfume River. The slogans against the Chinese hegemonists give way to humorous drawings about how to keep the town clean. At the Dong Ba central market, where there are no signs of shortages, on the sampans that ferry passengers from one bank of the river to the other, there is no reticence in beginning conversations with the women returning from their shopping. At the university, instructors and students delve into basic historical issues with a spontaneity that is truly encouraging.

Living in Ho Chi Minh City

In Ho Chi Minh City, one does not get exactly the same impressions. Naturally, the central market or one in a neighborhood such as Dakao, offers a greater variety of goods than the Hanoi markets, and there would appear to be a relative abundance of things. However, with 3.4 million inhabitants (compared with 4 million previously), the urban area is overpopulated and bears every sign of the overgrowth that has been associated with the Indo-Chinese conflict. The sequels of the second war are still present 5 years after the liberation, and one cannot accept without reservation the explanation that the old imperialist masters and their toadies are entirely responsible for the current difficulties.

For instance, the poor wretches who sleep in the streets or who took possession of an abandoned bridge over the so-called "Chinese Arroyo" to erect their flimsy shacks are not the same people who years ago were driven out of the countryside by the war, but newcomers who could not stand life

in the "new economic zones." Faced with an identical scene in the Mytho park on the bank of the river, those accompanying us first tried to tell us that these people were part of the "floating" population of the Mekong, but finally agreed that the "campers" had left new economic zones. These zones were created in order to help absorb the unemployment affecting 3 or 4 million people who had been dragged into the pseudo-urbanization or forced urbanization programs. Between 1976 and 1978, more than a million persons reportedly settled in the zones and cleared some 500,000 hectares (according to QUAN DOI NHAN DAN of 11 November 1979).

One of these facilities, located about 20 kilometers from Ho Chi Minh City, is the Le Minh Xuan State Farm, which produces pineapples on an area of more than 700 hectares. One unique aspect of our stay was that our visit to the farm was not planned in advance or announced. A brass band was off to play at the district seat and two young volleyball teams were having a match. Each family owns its own house and a garden 100 meters square, from which fruit, tubers and flowers may be freely sold on the market. Le Minh Xuan is exemplary: Located near the southern capital, the economic zone benefited from the massive support given it by the people's committee of Ho Chi Minh City. Running water (to counter the effects of the excessive alum in the water) and electricity have been provided for the settlers. When the settlers exhausted their original provisions, authorities renewed their material, food and financial help. Naturally not all the economic zones enjoyed the same solicitude. Remoteness and the authoritarian and sometimes even the irrational management of cadres occasionally caused veritable dramas.

Prostitution flourishes openly. The women who accost us each evening near the old park in the town (near the former circle sportif which has become the Workers' Club) are very young, not necessarily the fallen women of the American period who might have slipped back into "the life" after a period of "reeducation." The phenomenon can be explained by the difficulties of subsistence: unemployment, low salaries, but also by the absence of a certain number of heads of families held in the reeducation camps.

The average wage is about 50 dong. That is what a nursemaid gets. A registered nurse will make 55 dong a month while the women who work in a textile mill earn about 40 to 45 dong a month. University professors or engineers make around 120 dong monthly, while a doctor of medicine who has been practicing for 3 years will receive 60 dong. However, the higher one climbs in the socioprofessional hierarchy, the greater the gap between incomes, due to the fact that the salaries are increased by prerequisites and privileges which may seem minimal, but which in Vietnam create noticeable inequalities that are revolting in the eyes of many. In principal, all the workers may shop in the state-owned shops where the prices are very low but where supplies are neither regularly available nor sufficient. It is therefore often necessary to resort to the "free market," which is not the

"black market" (which exists for such things as medicines, for instance), since it is neither illegal nor clandestine, but governed by the laws of supply and demand. Workers in a machine shop, whose salaries range between 90 and 250 dong, believe that they gained by the change of regime because now they "work for the community" (in this case, the state, which orders pumps for the agricultural water) and no longer for a capitalist employer who pockets all the profits. (However, the boss in question is still in Ho Chi Minh City and receives a monthly emolument of 650 dong as a "national capitalist"...) And yet, these workers, who are happy that they now have trade unions that will really defend their interests and free medical care, hasten to add that 1,000 dong a month is needed to live decently and the government should make more goods available to the population at official prices.

Hence, to survive one has to hustle. Ho Chi Minh City is still Saigon-Cholon, the town for traffickers. With a foreign passport, one has access to the reserved shops where one can buy a carton of English cigarettes for $10 (34 dong at the preferential rate of exchange). Leaving the shop, one will immediately find a buyer for the carton at 200 dong. It will then be resold at up to 300 dong. Who on earth can buy cigarettes at that price? What is certain is that with a carton of "555," cigarettes one can get in to see a department head of the municipal people's committee. Furthermore, everything can be bartered: rice, milk, antiques, T-shirts and that very rare commodity, medicine. It would appear that the South Vietnamese have contracted some very bad habits: they take far too many chemical medicines. It is nonetheless true that in a tropical country, a great many diseases can only be treated by chemotherapy (such as antibiotics and sulfa drugs, for example). The so-called "green medicine" and acupuncture prove to be a poor excuse about as effective as an ideological poultice on a wooden leg. It is common for doctors to send their patients back home or else stand by, powerless to allay the suffering or impending death of the patient. The situation is aggravated with the spreading scarcity of the most basic means of good hygiene (soap, disinfectant such as bleach) and the fact that hospital linens cannot be properly sterilized. One must therefore look to the recent signing of agreements between Roussel-Uclaf and Rhone-Poulenc, on the one hand, and to the Vietnamese Government, on the other, to put their laboratories back into operation.

Most of the assembly plants are reduced to 40 percent, sometimes 25 percent, of their productive capacity. Whole neighborhoods that were formerly occupied by commercial and handicrafts establishments have locked their metal shutters. Whatever activity is left has shifted to the sidewalks, with illicit vending displaying none of the abundance of the "thieves' markets" of the years 1965-1975. The cafes and restaurants buzz with conversations and foreign music; social life revolves around drinks and food costing from 2 to 10 dong. The bars are never empty. Many Vietnamese have not changed their buying habits but it is a different type of people who now drink beer at 5 or 10 dong a mugful and get around on cycles that use black market gas costing 10 dong a liter. It hardly seems likely that it

would still be war profits and "trafficking with the Americans" that could cover such expenses. Nowadays, money circulating in the area comes from parallel deals or the misappropriation of funds, which has reached levels on a par with the shortage of goods and the power acquired by the bureaucracy. One of the new, and certainly not the least important, sources of profits, results from the desire of a great many people to leave Vietnam for good.

Those Who Leave

There is no place in Ho Chi Minh City, either between four walls or in the open air, where a foreigner is not accosted by would-be emigrants, from the woman who breaks into tears because, being an orphan, she cannot use the argument of uniting the family, to the elderly couple wishing to rejoin their children in France, but who run up against the neighborhood authorities' refusal to accept their papers unless they are willing to make a "sacrifice." Why should corruption not be rife among administrative and party cadres? It is a well-known fact that the departure of the Hoa (Vietnamese of Chinese origin) on boats was organized by the government itself in exchange for payment in gold taels. On the other hand, the authorities would like to get rid of the mixed-blood French-Vietnamese who represent some 10,000 or so persons, most of whom are of Vietnamese citizenship and culture and do not even speak French. The pretext they use is that of the social welfare (these minorities are accused of every sin in the book, from prostitution to the most reprehensible kinds of trafficking). However, to understand this policy clearly, it might be well to compare it with that applied in the case of the ethnic minorities from the highlands, to the Hoa in the north (after the break with China), a matter of assimilation in the case of one group but of distrust and isolation for the others. The fate of the Eurasians becomes even more complicated because the French Government accepts as citizens only persons both between 1948 and 1955, as if mixed blood did not exist outside the massive presence of the French expeditionary corps. For lack of solution, will 7,000 unwanted persons registered as "metis" (half-castes) by the Vietnamese authorities become the pariahs of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam?

Since November, illegal departures have resumed. And yet, the refugees are well aware even now that they are risking their lives, at sea or if they are recaptured. A teacher of our acquaintance was sentenced to 11 months in prison after failing in his attempt to escape.

For the Vietnamese Government, the critical economic situation is the only explanation for the departures. Economic difficulties are often brought up in the course of conversations, but they are not the only cause, any more than is the social affiliation of emigrants, which is invoked all too often. All those who were truly and deeply associated with the earlier regime have long since departed unless they are in camps or have

cunningly managed to switch loyalties. Last year's refugees or those now planning to leave belong to a broad social spectrum. They are people who very often were supportive of the (National Liberation Front/People's Revolutionary Group), welcomed the liberation joyfully or with a feeling of relief, and cooperated voluntarily with the new regime, particularly engineers, doctors, teachers, economists and financial experts and even a number of capitalists. After 3 or 4 years, they became weary, some surrendering to discouragement while others revolted. They all feel that they were duped and that they are prisoners in an absurd universe.

Thus, part of the population of what was South Vietnam is now in a state of moral secession. In Hanoi, we were told of the case of a formerly important cadre belonging to the southern resistance who at present, as a diplomat, "prefers to work abroad rather than to militate in South Vietnam because people do not like the revolution." His remark seemed abstract at first, but we gradually came to understand it. Other more extreme comments echoed his sentiment: "They betrayed the revolution," to the more prudent assessment that "The situation is improving, but the people remain at the crossroads; they have not yet resolutely embarked on the road of the revolution." What is more, these are the remarks of revolutionary cadres who put their life on the line. Vietnamese without any particularly political convictions are often content to voice more summary judgments concerning the virtues of socialism.

It is naturally quite difficult to assess the degree to which this discontent reflects the sentiments of the population of South Vietnam as a whole. It is mainly characteristic of the wage-earning petty bourgeoisie: technicans, civil servants, clerks, medical personnel and teachers, whose standard of living was drastically lowered by the extension to South Vietnam of the salary system prevailing in the north and whose moral living conditions have become very difficult.

What do the workers and peasants think? It is true that the communist government is making a great effort to redevelop the agricultural areas abandoned during the war and to settle the unemployed people from the towns there. The establishment of new economic zones is justified because it is the only policy possible. But it is not easy because the new units lack the heavy machinery necessary for agricultural development. However, on the plus side, the authorities have to their credit the rehabilitation of prostitutes and drug addicts, as well as the struggle against enormous social traum resulting from 20 years of war and military dictatorship in the south. As for the policy of collectivization, it is almost certain that it clashes with the peasants' passiveness, even the active opposition. Lacking any reliable statistics, it is impossible to say exactly what its results are. It is in Cuo Long Province that collectivization is reportedly the most advanced, involving 67 percent of the families and 55 percent of the land. However, in Long An Province, as of 1 November 1979, there were no more than 4 cooperatives and 282 production crews. Officially, South

Vietnam reportedly has only 12,437 production collectives and 271 agricultural collectives, comprising 491,000 families (31 percent of the total) working 463,000 hectares of land (24 percent of the cultivated area). All of these units are said to have 531 machines or over 6 HP, distributed among 3 stations. This is far from the initial goal, which was to complete the essential portion of the operation during the current year.

Unsuccessful Integration

There seems to be no doubt that the discontent goes far beyond the urban population of Ho Chi Minh City, Cholon, and the middle classes. The impression derived from a stay in South Vietnam is that a large part of the population feels that it is under the power of the system of political-military occupation. The noncommunist political groups in South Vietnam that fought the pro-American military dictatorship have not been integrated into the new Vietnamese state. Nor have all the communists in South Vietnam. Those who formerly led the NFL have been given position without real power.

Even if deep down inside the great majority of the people of South Vietnam feared a face-to-face encounter with the people of the north in 1975, they told themselves that among Vietnamese, they could always get along, providing the Americans left. Now disenchantment has taken the place of hope and bitterness creeps into conversations. It has gripped the leaders of the FLN/GRP and the activists of the "third force" are bitterly reproached for having welcomed the communists. A wide breach separates the population from the leaders and members of the regime, whomever they may be.

One must therefore beware of the overly simplistic expressions as "of the north" and "of the south." Both terms must be understood in their essentially political meaning. We have met "northern" cadres who in fact are from the south, but who, when they were very young, went to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam where they received their training. Furthermore, the north-south dichotomy presents the major flaw of excluding central Vietnam. Yet a very important group of party leaders are originally from Quang-Ngai-Quang-Nam, starting with Secretary General Le Duan and the official in charge of agricultural collectivization Vo Chi Cong. The picture is further complicated by the constant presence or the resurgence of special interest groups, especially among the Cochin Chinese, as in 1955, when refugees from Tonkin arrived in the south and took over several commands. One must certainly not be led astray by a regionalistic type of speech. However, since 1976, accelerated reunification (Le Duan had given assurances that it would be gradual), and the more or less forced collectivization (until the plenary of the Central Committee in August-September) were accompanied by other events that ended up by taking a consistently forbidding turn. For the factories, at the university, in the hospitals, on state farms, posts of responsibility are entrusted to people from the north (in the political sense of the term), for better or for worse.

Revolutionaries may be incompetent or less competent than their "southern" and "bourgeois" colleagues but they will have the last word. Frequently, the result is an exasperating mess that explains why many technical and economic cadres, tired of fighting, have given up cooperating with a regime they had originally sought to serve.

The squads of policemen one sees maneuvering behind the cathedral in Saigon and who comb the city mainly hail from the overpopulated province of Nhe Tinh in the north, which does nothing to abate the distrust toward a machine of surveillance and coercion that is seemingly goodnatured but whose rigor and efficiency vary from district to district.

Furthermore, in government offices and education, purging by means of voluntary resignations or outright dismissals, has varied in scope, but has nonetheless been real. At the Saigon Faculty of Arts and Letters, about half the teaching staff was replaced. In addition, the departments of philosophy and sociology were closed down and the professors either transferred to other departments or else deprived of their posts while retaining their pay. Finally, at the university, on the spot reeducation was required for a number of months. Ideological censorship is stifling. At the Saigon Central Library, books published before 1975 are no longer available to the reading public. They are reserved for "advanced" researchers, who must present a written request from the institution for which they work and can only be consulted in a special reading room. In the public reading room, only books published in Hanoi are found.

It is difficult to accept without reservation the argument that South Vietnam's economy, which was wholly dependent on imports (for its raw materials) could no longer function with liberation. In fact, a number of plants used local raw materials (particularly the canneries). The manufacturing processes and commercial markets were in good order and technicians and capitalist management personnel had placed themselves at the disposal of the new regime to participate in "the construction of a new Vietnam." Yet, generally speaking, production dropped in quality and quantity. In some cases, the decline can be attributed to incompetence or at least to the failure of new cadres from the underground forces of the north to adapt. In other cases, ideological pretexts replaced technical or financial rationale (as exemplified by the incense sticks formerly exported to Singapore and Hong Kong; Interrupted for a time, manufacturing soon resumed when the government realized that its stoppage meant a loss of tens of thousands of dollars).

It is not only the "bourgeois" groups that have been pushed aside or demoted. Communist cadres from the south, not in agreement with the unification decided upon suddenly and unilaterally or with working methods, were left out in the cold.

Ways to 'Reconciliation'

The newcomers[8] must also fill the vacuum left by those who, since 1975, have been subjected to "reeducation," which is sometimes nothing more than outright imprisonment, sometimes a divided schedule of studies and manual labor. Some 80,000 to 200,000 persons, according to some estimates, 700,000 persons, according to others, have reportedly been arrested to date. In most cases, it was because of their former membership in civilian or military institutions of the regime of the South Vietnamese generals, without any distinction being made as to the extent of their participation. One old man of 64, who was a lower-level employee of the Saigon National Assembly, had not yet been liberated by the end of 1979. Another person was regarded as a criminal because he had been mobilized as an officer in the air force, where he taught English to those who were to go to the United States for training. On the other hand, members of the resistance suddenly learned one day that Colonel Ve, inventor of the so-called "tiger cages" and who himself tortured a number of patriots, was about to be freed. Their protests put an end to the plan, but it is said that the colonel's lady boasted of having spent 70 taels of gold.

A university student who spent several months in jail after being accused of belonging to an opposition group asked: "Can anyone make sense out of this? In this system, the arbitrary goes hand-in-hand with the absurd." At any rate, it is hard to find anyone who has not himself been subject to "reeducation" or who does not have a close relative or friend who was detained for a time. The "reeducation" policy varies according to the place and the class of person. For instance, the Hue students were not reeducated while those in Saigon had to attend seminars. In the labor camps, the situation seems to vary depending on whether they are run by the army or by the security forces, and depending on the officers and their location in the north or south. Families may send food packages, medicine and clothing which reach the addressees. Visitation rights exist, with periods between visits varying from place to place. However, we will cite the case of a woman from Ho Chi Minh City, who, in order to visit her husband 100 kilometers to north of Hanoi (and to talk to him for 2 hours in the presence of a guard who took notes), had to pay approximately 3,000 dong for fare and her stay. In her case, it is out of the question to think of spending a similar amount again, even once a year.

Aside from the punishment of real war criminals, what could be the purpose of this reeducation? It would seem to have a dual goal: removing cadres from any future organization of an opposition and bringing about an ideological conversion. But are the leaders really looking for support for the new government? With the passing of time and the trend of government policy, many persons now think that "national reconciliation" was no more than "a purely tactical slogan."

In fact, the liberation of South Vietnam came at a time when conditions were even, after the liquidation of almost all military forces (four regular

divisions, without counting regional and local forces), and the political forces of the FLN/GRP (decimated during the 1968 Tet offensive and finished off by the American Operation Phoenix). It was the massive commitment of forces and conventional military methods by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam that was the decisive element, whereas on the political level, the "third force" never managed to assert itself. This situation of inequality created a shaky dependency, so that now the south is left with the feeling of being the conquered ones, whom the northern cadres force to pay heavily for the choice--voluntary for some, involuntary for others--of a capitalistic economic and social system linked to the U.S. As for the communists from the south, they themselves have been too long accustomed to the way of life in the capital not to be suspected of being more or less contaminated by its ideology and behavior patterns.

The Indochinese Mortgage

For Vietnam, the Indochinese conflict involves some risk of internal destabilization. However, its leaders have difficulty envisaging a compromise in Cambodia because of the size of the stakes involved. For them, Cambodia and Laos are the strategic covering of the Vietnamese state. In view of the Soviet Union's presence, China's attempt to gain a zone of influence in Southeast Asia, taking advantage of the "vacuum" left by the withdrawal of the Western imperialists, has as a natural and inevitable corollary Hanoi's effort to make Indochina a Vietnamese zone of influence, organized not within the institutional framework of an Indochinese political federation, but within that of a system of states maintaining "special relations" among themselves under the aegis of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, in short a sort of regional Warsaw Pact. Such an organization of Indochina is the only one able to neutralize the centrifugal forces comprised of the ethnic minorities as yet poorly integrated into the united national structure which the Vietnamese communists intend to establish. The Vietnamese Khmers Krom from the south (Soc Trang and Tra Vinh provinces) rebelled in 1977. In the high plateaus of the central region, FULRO (United Liberation Front of Oppressed Races) resistance groups are still operating: It appears that some of the minorities of the north have not been insensitive to Chinese overtures, particularly after elimination of their autonomous zones. Shortcircuiting any possible irredentist moves encouraged by rival communist states, such as Pol Pot's Cambodia in particular, would thus seem to be a domestic policy requirement. Long term economic stakes are not any less crucial for countries which figure among the poorest in the world: the dispute over dividing up off-shore resources in the South China Sea; the energy prospects for the vast Mekong hydroelectric project; the mining potential, rice growing and agro-industrial potential on the plains and plateaus of the middle Mekong,[9] and so forth. Behind Vietnam's membership in CEMA and the current insertion of its economy into the international economic planning of the socialist countries, is also the design for an Indochinese CEMA. There will undoubtedly not be any integrated political federation but Hanoi makes no attempt to hide the fact that Indochina as an

economic unit will become a reality. For all these reasons, Vietnam can never turn the past. That is what Pham Van Dong meant when he said "The situation is irreversible," all the more so because in Cambodia the balance of political and military forces is tipped in favor of the Vietnamese troops--who may hope to lock up the Thai border and neutralize the Khmer Rouge guerrillas--as well as Heng Samrin's government. One therefore cannot see what would persuade Hanoi to accept a compromise such as, for instance, the "demilitarization" of the conflict and its "repoliticization" by the establishment, with the backing of the great powers, of a national unity government including Prince Sihanouk. For the Vietnamese leaders, the latter would, in fact, be acceptable only within a governmental formula controlled by the communist forces currently included in with Heng Samrin's administration. Any other solution seems unrealistic, even if the Chinese offensive the Vietnamese expected last fall and which some forecasted for the coming spring were now to take place.

Membership in CEMA and the entry of Vietnamese troops into Cambodia, stem from a fundamental strategical choice which only a hypothetical cooling off of the Soviet-Vietnamese alliance could alter. There are signs that party cadres are concerned about the tendency of Soviets to create increasingly direct ties with Phnom-Penh, overlooking the "special relationship" which Hanoi deems it has the right to maintain with Cambodia. Nor did the break with China fail to cause a political and cultural trauma within the party because of the deep attraction exercised in Vietnam, until very recently, by the Chinese revolutionary model, Maoism before the cultural revolution. Some of the older cadres note that, basically, Ho Chi Minh "Vietnamized" the Maoist revolutionary formula. Any possible snags in Soviet-Vietnamese relations could revive the old ideological and especially cultural tropism, which inclined the Vietnamese party toward the Chinese version of Marxism-Leninism. Already at the beginning of 1980, there are those who wonder whether the abandonment of the policy of equilibrium between Moscow and Peking does not entail more disadvantages than advantages.

These hesitations are too, however, to serve as the basis for any announcement of a reversal in strategy. In the final analysis, everything will depend on the ability of the communist regime to make the Vietnamese people accept the economic and social cost of the Sino-Indochinese conflict. The price is difficult to assess, but it will probably be a very heavy one if one considers the burden that military expenditure must represent for such a poor country. According to certain particularly critical cadres, 73 percent of the budget is allegedly absorbed by military expenditures and security. Even if, as one suspects, the proportion is much lower, the drain on total resources would be considerable, seriously hindering investment prospects and above all, compelling the country to postpone indefinitely what is regarded as the fundamental objective of communist regimes in Asia: the transformation of the economic and social structures of the rural world. It is, indeed, on the domestic front that the strategy is truly being tested. Moreover, that is what the Chinese are wagering. It

is also the reason why the Vietnamese leaders, while having chosen to generalize the political and social structures of the north in the south, are nevertheless keeping close watch on the domestic front and from time to time, applying the brakes whenever it is necessary to stem the economic disintegration that periodically threatens.

Resuming Production

In August of 1978, the newspaper NHAN DAN described the weaknesses of the economic administration in highly pessimistic terms: "The actual power of machines and equipment in use is very low and represents no more than 50 percent of their nominal capacity. A work day lasts only 4 to 5 hours. In agricultural cooperatives, there is great waste in the use of their land, as well as that allotted to families for their own needs. Everywhere land lies fallow even though there is no shortage of labor. Substantial amounts of funds and materials are left untouched and undiscovered. Theft and damage to public property are commonplace. Two contradictory aspects peacefully coexist: arbitrary bureaucratism and the absence of any sense of responsibility. There is no close cooperation between the different branches and levels of the administration, which sometimes clash. We know what will happen if this situation persists."[10]

It is quite likely that on the eve of the Sixth Plenary of the Central Committee held in August 1979, things had reached a breaking point. Economic reforms adopted at that time mark the emergence in Vietnam of positions closely resembling the modernistic technocracy of the eastern countries. These reforms are designed to introduce a minimum of economic rationality and financial profitability into the operation of the economic machine. It has been emphasized that "economic efficiency must become one of our prime objectives."[11] In January of 1980, the promotion to the economic ministries of administrative officials from the State Planning Committee and the current purge of the party to the detriment of its "peasant" elements, ideologically regarded as "Maoist" and to the advantage of cadres with technical training who have often worked their way up through army channels, are part of the same trend. To check agriculture's decline in the south, it was decided that collectivization should be slowed down. The chairman of the commission for the agricultural reform in the south, Vo Chi Cong, announced at the beginning of September that, "From now until 1980, the main unit (of cooperativization) will be the production collective with an area of 30 to 50 hectares. The setting up of cooperatives is only experimental and is aimed at providing good models..."[12] In the country as a whole, both cooperatives and enterprises are now authorized and encouraged to produce freely, once they have attained the quotas set by the plan. Above all, they have almost complete responsibility for their own management, and wages in the future will be subject to the financial impact of the enterprise's results. The state will no longer bear losses. Free circulation of the paddy workers from one province to another has been instituted in the south. Finally, many incentives are given to

the so-called "family economy"--that is, small-scale, private production. Henceforth, the so-called "regional" or local handicrafts industries will be favored in order to reduce shortages of consumer goods, and industrial scrap will be subcontracted for home processing. A directive issued early in September authorized peasant families to "borrow" unused plots and cultivate them and also authorized cooperatives to "lend" families land left fallow over the winter as a kind of "jobbing."

It is too early to measure the real impact of these measures. One can see that the cost of rice, meat and sugar, which dropped 5 to 10 percent on the free market, at the end of August 1979, apparently rose to the previous level at the end of the year. Above all, there has been no change even after the cabinet reshuffling in January 1980 in basic power structures. The three basic priorities of Vietnamese communism in its current phase are: "Socialization:--that is, nationalization--of the economic, social and cultural structures in the south, the taking control in Laos and Cambodia, and inclusion in the system of alliances and the international economic division of CEMA countries, form a whole, a coherent strategy. The whole problem comes down to reconciling them with the necessary tactical caution with regard to privations and the burden that workers and peasants will be called upon to bear. The future of a unified Vietnamese nation will depend on the ability to pull off this difficult task of arbitration in time. In the event of a prolonged breakdown, the possibility of explosions of public discontent is not excluded, judging by precedents told of in rumors--some unverifiable, to be sure--such as the occupation of Thai Binh in 1974 by groups of disabled soldiers or the peasant demonstration in Long An Province last November. Vietnam is not safe from a "Gdansk".... It would then become necessary to review the three priorities cited above. That is the precise hope of various latent opposition groups, groups one can perceive behind the facade of unanimity even in party ranks: critical intellectuals; scientists desirous of breaking away from the oppressive tutelage guardianship of the ideological machine and financial limitations inherent in the present orientation, anxious to gain access to the privileged status of their colleagues in other countries where socialism exists; economists devoted to the idea of Hungarian-type economic reforms; and finally, disappointed militants, in short, who want a different social and political model, one that is more democratic, truly based on free enterprise of the people and on the right to self-organization. The future of the country will henceforth depend upon "the alternative." In Vietnam, as everywhere in the East and in the West, socialism must once again be reinvented.

Achievements and the Limits of a Revolution

For Western leftists, the Indochinese conflict, the first local war between communist nations, was the equivalent, all things considered, of August 1914 for socialists at the beginning of the century: the end of a certain vision of revolution and socialism, of which Vietnam was the last historical mainstay; in a way the facts getting even with the myth. A new historical

crisis of revolutionary thought and practice, comparable in scale with that of the years 1910-1920, opened up, leading to a salutary return to realism.

The Vietnamese revolution remains as an example. It was the last great "Leninist" revolution, if by that we mean a revolution guided for decades by a traditional Communist Party. Since that time, the revolution has been militarized and exported. Armored columns and the expeditionary forces take the place of party action and everyone knows that henceforth there will not be one or two or three Vietnams... The Vietnamese example also bears witness to the real historical abilities of the great national and social revolutions of the Third World, abilities it is now the fashion to scoff at. In Vietnam, the communist revolution gave rise to a number of fundamental preliminary conditions, beginning with the overthrow of the structure of political and military dependence established by foreign imperialisms and the old leadership class. But such revolutions cannot yield any more, given the present state of the world and in the absence of any socialist inroads in the capitalist West. Alone, they insert themselves into the nation-oriented structure of the world and into international economic competition, whose models and historical motives are to be found in the West. It is a double logic of state: the monopoly of power in a bureaucratic structure in the hands of a stratum of cadres, its insertion into a system of outside interstate alliances, which completed in Vietnam, what was at the outset a vast national and social movement that was rich and diversified and that contained countless other possibilities. The people of South Vietnam were "liberated" by the army of the north. They did not rise up against the military dictatorship in 1975 as they had in the 1960's. Nor did they defend it. They simply allowed it to collapse without taking advantage of the situation to rise up. That which prevailed, once again, was the logic of substitutionism, the product of a historical situation, stemming from the successive refusals of the French imperialists to permit the free organisation of deeprooted forces, in modern Vietnamese society, in autonomous, civil society. This logic made the antigovernment party, which sprang from the meeting, within the scope of the underground revolutionary struggle--the only remaining way out--of the revolutionary intelligentsia, militant peasants and workers, a state party substituting itself for the action which should properly have been taken by social forces. However, in Vietnam for half a century, the civilian population has not ceased in its attempt to organize, to move forward, in 1925-27, 1936-38, 1945-46, 1956-1960, and so on. Each time, these attempts have been crushed by foreign imperialists, French above all, for reasons having to do with the defense of their vital interests. The communist counter-state which became the government ended up by autonomous organization of the different social classes. In the new Vietnam, today, as in all other communist states, legally and politically speaking, civil society is nothing; the state is everything.

[material in box p 15]

To Obtain Information from the North and the South

French university professors Pierre Brocheux and Daniel Hemery spent 3 months in Vietnam, from September until the end of November 1979. It was a critical time for that nation, which had just endured the Chinese offensive and had to contend with the tensions created by the occupation of Cambodia. The Sixth Plenary of the Vietnamese Communist Party Central Committee in August and September had also just passed resolutions designed to "loosen the screws" and proceed to an economic redeployment. The authors were allowed to circulate freely, or bicycle on foot or, within certain areas, namely, the districts of Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City.

The war and the daily struggle for survival have caused the Vietnamese to withdraw into a shell from which they now have difficulty emerging. But if they do find it hard to loosen up, it is mainly because of the government ban on contacts with foreigners, a rule only lifted for those to whom age or their role in public relations in international circles confers immunity.

In Vietnam, there are two key words: organize and register. Without them, nothing can be done. Treating one's guests well means that nothing must be improvised, that nothing be allowed to intervene which would allow for the expression of individuality or which might contradict collectively sanctioned standards or points of view. This system explains the dilatory manner in which work programs get under way. At the same time, it always makes it possible to find an excuse for not doing what was planned. In the same way, the state of war enables one to reject certain requests under the pretext of ensuring "the safety of the guests."

These general conditions are valid for the country as a whole. However, insofar as the two authors of this article are concerned, it should be noted that the conditions were adjusted differently in the north and in the south. In the north, the authors were in unknown territory so that their dependence on those accompanying them was all the greater. In the south, and particularly in Ho Chi Minh City, the fact that one of them was in his native land and spoke the language and the existence of a network of relations gave them a greater freedom to circulate and to increase the number of semi-official meetings. Even conversations with officials took on a less formal tone.

In short, the major obstacle encountered by the foreign visitor in a country like Vietnam is not so much the restrictions on movement and meetings as it is the knocking into the thick screen of appearances and the climate of uncertainty.

FOOTNOTES

1. NHAN DAN, 16 October 1979.

2. Data provided by QUAN DOI NHAN DAN, 4 November 1979.

3. At the official rate of exchange, the dong = 2 French francs.

4. QUAN DOI NHAN DAN, 11 September 1979.

5. TAP CHI CONG SAN, July 1979.

6. F. Houtart & G. Lemercinter: "Hai Van, une commune rurale du delta du fleuve Route" Centre Tricontinental, Brussels, 1979.

7. NHAN DAN 30 August 1979.

8. The cadres coming from the north with their families total some 700,000 persons settled in Ho Chi Minh City. (figures provided without vouching for their accuracy.)

9. See the figures given in No 373 of PROBLEMES POLITIQUES ET SOCIAUX, 12 October 1979: "Indochine, la premier guerre locale entre Etats communistes", La Documentation Francaise, Paris.

10. NHAN DAN, 7 August 1978.

11. NHAN DAN, 1 November 1979.

12. NHAN DAN, 6 September 1979.

7129
CSO: 4200

AGRICULTURE

EDITORIAL URGES FULL, EFFECTIVE USE OF AGRICULTURAL LAND

Hanoi NHAN DAN in Vietnamese 14 Apr 80 p 1

[Editorial: "Putting Agricultural Land to Full Use"]

[Text] Land is a precious resource and the most fundamental means of production of agriculture. The per capita land for crop growing in our country is less than 1,000 square meters, but it must yield enough grain to feed more than 50 million people and supply a large volume of raw materials for industry and farm products for export. Therefore, this land must be protected, improved and used with utmost effectiveness. In addition to actively extending the cultivated area and building new economic zones, the full use of tame land by means of intensive cultivation measures and multicropping is an important permanent direction that agriculture must take to make every inch of land an inch of true gold.

Some localities have fully used their land, avoided leaving it idle, managed to get many crop cycles and thus obtained from it quite high productivity and yield, with the value of every hectare being 2,000-3,000 dong per year and 8-10 tons of rice and subsidiary food crops. Such typical progressive performance is not widespread yet. A common situation is a wasteful use of land: tame land is left idle; only one crop is grown because of lack of water; and crop growing does not go hand in hand with care and fertilizing.

The policy of encouraging full use of agricultural land issued by the Council of Ministers on 10 September 1979 is aimed at putting an end to wasting land and laying a foundation for exploiting land with the highest economic effectiveness. If we succeed in getting an additional quintal of paddy per hectare from the 3.5 million hectares of rice-growing land, extending the winter crop in the north in the nearly 1 million hectares of 2-rice crop land and growing another grain crop in the more than 2 million hectares of cultivated land in the Mekong delta, which largely remains a one-crop area, we will have full ability to satisfy our needs for grain for the people and feed for domestic animals and raw materials for industry and will get more farm commodities for export.

Great results have been obtained in the last winter crop in terms of potato and sweet potato harvests. Hundreds of thousands of hectares of virgin and idle land are being put to use.

We have learned through the months of implementing the new policy that there must be tight leadership over the implementation of this policy, conservative tendencies must be overcome and at the same time such phenomena resulting from a lack of positive guidance as leasing land at the convenience of the people concerned, considering tame land as virgin or idle land and failing to impose the condition for protecting, improving and using land according to plans must be prevented; a situation has been allowed to happen in which crop allocation and the pattern for building ricefields were determined by the people having leased the land, which would be unsuitable for the common plan. In some other localities, however, management has been too strict as they did not lease land to cooperative members for fear of failing to ensure management of labor and technical materials; as a result, land continued to be left idle. It is necessary to settle properly the relationships between the interests of the state and those of the collectives and farmers' families.

On the basis of making sure to keep the means of production as common properties, achieving distribution based on labor and maintaining the managerial institution, we can adopt flexible quotas to encourage every family and everybody to contribute to strengthening the state economy and collective economy. Only after the state-operated and collective production organizations cannot till all of their land will land be leased to cooperative members. The individuals who receive the leased land must contribute the right number of working days and fertilizer to the collective land, return the land on time and have the responsibility for improving the soil. If these rules are correctly carried out, the state-operated and collective production will be strengthened, the family-based economy will be developed in the right direction, land will be fully used and the social product will be more abundant.

5598
CSO: 4209

AGRICULTURE

STATE FARMS IN THE NORTH TO PRODUCE GOODS FOR EXPORT

Hanoi NHAN DAN in Vietnamese 15 Apr 80 p 1

[VNA News Release: "Central, Basic and Long-term Task of State Farm in the North Is To Produce Goods for Export"]

[Text] The Ministry of Agriculture has just organized a conference of state farms in the northern provinces to discuss the measures to take to fulfill the 1980 plan and to score achievements to celebrate the three big holidays and, for the state farms alone, to mark the 20th anniversary of President Ho Chi Minh sending a letter to the cadres and workers in the sector (1 October 1960).

After nearly 20 years of struggling, the state-operated agricultural sector has proved and is proving the important position and role of the state-operated economy in agriculture in particular and the economy in general.

Our state, which has considered state farms as the important economic base of new economic zones, has been investing in building these farms into the centers of economic zones. In addition to quickly perfecting the state farms in the north, the Ministry of Agriculture at the same time steps up the development and construction of state farms in the newly-opened land in the south.

Implementing the policy of concentrating efforts on agricultural development as proposed by the Fourth Party Congress and the Sixth Plenum of the VCP Central Committee, within their role and position, our state farms are striving to move forward to really become a strong support for the state to secure a large volume of export goods and considerable quantities of grain and foods, thus contributing to actively maintaining a balance in grain and food supplies so as to serve industry, national defense and other sectors. The state farms in the north consider producing large quantities of high-quality goods for export as their central, basic and long-term task. They have the task of organizing the planting and extensive cultivation of industrial crops and fruit trees for export in all cultivable areas and must firmly put aside for export all of the exportable products.

The state farm sector also strives to become a progressive hard-core production force that helps to drive forward the agricultural production of the country as a whole.

To properly fulfill their principal task, the state farms in the northern provinces step up the opening of new land, extend the cultivated areas, try to quickly shape themselves according to plan, organize intensive cultivation right from the beginning, apply a high degree of intensive cultivation and continuously to orchards and at the same time have plans for planting trees to replace in time the orchards that will soon reach the end of the period of economic exploitation. All the state farms that produce goods for export must adhere to their task and teach their cadres and workers the concept of caring about export and practicing thrift and making savings for export. All echelons, sectors and localities, particularly the localities that have state farms, must help and teach the people to assist state farms in fulfilling this important task.

All state farms are to take advantage of the conditions for full use of land, labor and means of production to step up the production of grain and foods. The immediate goal (1980) requires every cadre, worker and civil servant in the state farm sector to try to achieve self-sufficiency for himself and his family by having 3 months' supply of grain so as to make sure the production and business task is carried out in a normal way. With more than 300,000 mouths to feed, if our state farms are self-sufficient in terms of grain supply for 3 months, they will help the state by making from 13,000 to 15,000 tons of grain in paddy equivalent available. This quantity of grain will be included by the state in the quotas to be supplied and with the amount of money resulting from the difference based on the agreed prices in the rice-growing zone being used as deduction.

The conference also proposed the measures to be taken to step up the raising of buffaloes, cows and the domestic animals and fowls that eat leaves and grass, to maintain undiminished the population of breeding hogs and to raise meat hogs in appropriate numbers (feed produced on the spot to be balanced with on-the-spot food production).

The conference discussed improving some aspects of economic management, properly consolidating the management machinery in order to fulfill its task and to divide its force, and helping to build state farms in the south.

The delegates also discussed improving the living conditions of cadres, workers and civil servants; building the force that remains ready to protect production and to maintain order and security; and helping to fulfill well any assigned task.

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EDITORIAL URGES GROWING OF PROTEIN-RICH LEGUMINOUS PLANTS

Hanoi NHAN DAN in Vietnamese 16 Apr 80 p 1

[Editorial: "Grow Leguminous Plants"]

[Text] Of all the plant species the leguminous plants [plants of the dau family or Papilionaceae] have the highest protein content. They also have some special qualities that other plants do not have — absorbing and fixing atmospheric nitrogen. Soybean has a protein content of 30-50 percent, or 5 times higher than that of paddy. Peanut has 10 times as much fat as corn; green bean and wax bean have a protein content of 15-33 percent. Some leguminous plants like sesbania, cot khi [Terphrosia candida], muong hoa vang [Senna], needle grass [Stipa], etc. have a very high content of chlorophyll and can thus be used as fertilizer.

Such qualities give high economic values to leguminous plants. They are used as nutrients-rich foods for people and animals and as green manure for feeding plants and improving the soil (1 hectare of leguminous plants each season can provide 50-70 kilograms of pure protein).

Along with reorganizing production, some localities have been paying attention to including leguminous plants in their planned allocation of crops within the pattern of crop rotation and multicropping and on the basis of their local production conditions and have obtained good initial results.

Hai Hung Province has succeeded for the first time in growing soybean in the winter season between two rice crops. Some localities in Ha Bac, Quang Nam-Da Nang, Nghia Binh and Tien Giang Provinces have grown soybean or peanut between the winter-spring and tenth-month rice crops. For the hilly areas that every year face the problem of erosion caused by heavy rains, some localities have grown leguminous plants as a measure to prevent the topsoil from being washed away. Vinh Phu Province has Dong Thanh Cooperative which, with the slogan, "concentrate on the hills," has grown peanut or cot khi as a companion crop of manioc. The peanut and manioc yield has been higher than where only peanut or manioc was grown, and the problem of topsoil erosion has been reduced. Hai Hau is the leading district in terms of growing sesbania.

The localities that grew leguminous plants as rotation, additional, companion or overlapping catch crops have all obtained good results -- extended crop season, better plants and better soil. The growing of leguminous plants has not been extensively widened yet. The planned norms set for peanut, soybean, other leguminous plants grown as food crops and green-manure plants were never reached in the past years.

The possibility of extending the areas for leguminous plants in our country is very great. In all agricultural zones appropriate leguminous plants can be grown on a year-round basis in any type of soil. To extend the areas for these valuable plants, localities and production installations must reorganize production, plan the use of land and bring leguminous plants into production plans. In addition to creating specialized cultivation zones, we must encourage the people to grow crop everywhere in any type of soil and by themselves.

If we want to develop any crop, we must adopt a correct policy of encouragement.

If the country as a whole can grow each year a few millions of hectares of leguminous plants (including concentrated and scattered growing), there will be good changes in our agricultural production and living conditions. This is something that is totally within our ability to do quickly by means of organization and policy, rather than by a few newspaper articles.

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GOOD PROGRESS MADE AT CEMENT FACTORY CONSTRUCTION SITE

Hanoi NHAN DAN in Vietnamese 15 Apr 80 p 1

[Article: "Bim Son Cement Factory Construction Site -- Soviet Technicians and Our Cadres and Workers Carry out Emulation Agreement"]

[Text] Carrying out their emulation agreement to celebrate Lenin's 110th birthday and President Ho Chi Minh's 90th birthday, our cadres and workers and the team of Soviet technicians working at the construction site of Bim Son Cement Factory have proposed the goals for every basic unit to achieve. The work site was concentrating its efforts on completing the building of the transformer and power distribution station, the coal storage, the underground parts of the coal- and stone-receiving facilities, the roofs of machine shops, the hot and cold ends of kilns, etc.

By the end of the first quarter the stone founfation had been completed for a road section leading to the quarry running from kilometer post 0 to kilometer post 28.74. Mechanized Construction Work Enterprise No 15 exploded dynamite to destroy 120,000 cubic meters of rocks, thus achieving its planned goal for the first quarter. The technicians' team at the work site was awarded the traveling banner of the Embassy of the Soviet Union for its labor accomplishments. These technicians were determined to keep this banner until the first bag of cement would be produced.

The work site has proposed the measures to reorganize assembly units that would do away with intermediary levels and thus ensure smooth operations of materials, vehicles and machines, and to distribute work and materials more rationally to construction and assembly units. Many units and teams are currently working in three continuous shifts to complete permanent welding of parts of kiln No 1. In the second quarter, the team of Soviet technicians and our work site cadres and workers organized 2 communist working days on Sundays 20 April and 18 May, organized the planting of friendship trees to express eternal gratitude toward Lenin and Uncle Ho, raised the degree of responsibility for each work of every person in charge and improved the organization of production leadership at the work site.

Although the rate of progress of construction does not respond to our need, our cadres and workers and the Soviet technicians are concentrating on building and assembling whatever parts of the projects we are under favorable conditions to finish, improving management and rationally organizing the activities at the work site to achieve greater effectiveness.

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